

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application as amended. Claims 1-2, 14-15, 22-26, 28-29, 33 and 35 have been amended. Claims 12-13, 18-20 and 30 have been cancelled, without prejudice. New claims 40-41 have been added. Therefore, claims 1-11, 14-17, 21-29 and 31-41 are presented for examination.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejection

Claims 1-8, 14-17, 21-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e), as being anticipated by Epinions.com (“Epinions”)

Epinions discloses allowing consumers “to write about products [they] love or hate . . . [and they] get to *rate the usefulness of anyone's opinion*” (page 2; emphasis provided). Epinions further discloses “[b]uilding [a] Web of Trust” by “*rat[ing] reviews*” and, as acknowledged by the Examiner, “the particular user's *rating of other users' review* and the other *users' reviews of the particular user's ratings*” (pages 5 and 9-10; Office Action, mailed Nov. 19, 2003, page 18; emphasis provided).

In contrast, claim 1, as amended, in pertinent part, recites, “deriving one or more community ratings uniquely corresponding to a particular user by aggregating the one or more characteristic values associated with the particular user and the one or more characteristic values associated with each user of the plurality of users sponsored to the online trading community by the particular user” (emphasis provided). Epinions does not teach or reasonably suggest deriving one or more community ratings as recited by claim 1.

For example, first, Epinions discloses “rating of other users' review and the other user's reviews of the particular user's ratings” which is not the same as “associating the one or more characteristic values associated with the particular user” as recited by claim

1.

Second, Epinions does not teach or reasonably suggest deriving one or more community ratings by aggregating the one or more characteristic values associated with the particular user and those of the user sponsored by the particular user as recited by claim 1.

For example, a user's community rating may be represented by the sum of the user's characteristic value and the characteristic value of the users referred to the online trading community by the user.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claims.

With regard to claims 14, 22, 28 and 33, they contain limitations similar to those of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14, 22, 28 and 33 and their dependent claims.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

Claims 11-12 and 33-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Epinions.com.

Claims 9-10 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Epinions.com in view of Aho et al., Data Structures and Algorithms ("Aho").

With regard to claim 33, it contains limitations similar to those of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 33 and its dependent claims.

With regard to claims 9-12, 18 and 34-39, they depend from one of independent claims 1, 14 and 33 and thus, include the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims as amended are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and the application be allowed.

Invitation for a Telephone Interview

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Request for an Extension of Time

Applicants respectfully petition for an extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) should one be necessary. Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 to cover the necessary fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a) for such an extension.

Charge our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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